



GARVIN G. AMBROSE, ESQ.
State Victim Advocate

Testimony of Garvin G. Ambrose, Esq., State Victim Advocate
Submitted to the Judiciary Committee
Monday, March 10, 2014

Good day Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. For the record, my name is Garvin Ambrose and I am the Victim Advocate for the State of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning:

Raised House Bill No. 5485, *An Act Concerning the Confidentiality of Identifying Information Pertaining to Victims of Voyeurism.*

The Office of the Victim Advocate (OVA) **supports** Raised House Bill No. 5485, as the proposal will extend privacy and confidentiality protection to victims of voyeurism in the same manner as those protections are provided to victims of sexual assault. These shared protections make sense, as there is a well-established link between sexual assault and voyeurism. According to Penn State's Health and Wellness Center, among other authorities on sexual violence, voyeurism and sexual assault both fall along the "sexual violence continuum." While sexual assault is distinguished because it involves physical contact, both sexual assault and voyeurism arise from similar beliefs regarding consent and the objectification of others; both crimes have a detrimental impact upon victims.

The privacy and confidentiality protections afforded by Raised House Bill No. 5485 are critical to a victim of voyeurism, as they protect the victim from further victimization and distress. Victims of voyeurism may experience feelings of shame, violation, or fear and may justly fear public ridicule or judgment and continued violations by the accused. For these reasons, it is important to both a victim's safety and peace of mind that his or her personal information be protected against disclosure. Additionally, there is no public purpose that would be served by disclosure of this information.

Moreover, these protections empower victims to report and cooperate in the prosecution of voyeurism. Because of the fear and shame associated with voyeurism, victims may be deterred from reporting and cooperating with prosecution if their personal information is going to be publicly accessible. By protecting victims' personal information from disclosure, Raised House Bill No. 5485 removes this barrier.

For these reasons, the OVA **supports** Raised House Bill No. 5485. I thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

With gratitude,

Garvin G. Ambrose, Esq.
State Victim Advocate